

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 3422

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR US

SUBJ: NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING; POSSIBLE CARAMANLIS ATTENDANCE

REF A. ATHENS 3373 B. STATE 101809

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN

1. I HAD A PRIVATE MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS THIS AFTERNOON AND TOOK THE OCCASION TO DISCUSS THE UPCOMING NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING IN BRUSSELS. (AS YOU KNOW, BITSIOS IS LEAVING TOMORROW FOR A SEVERAL-TIME POSTPONED TWO-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO ROME, AND I WANTED HIM TO WEIGH IN ON THIS SUBJECT WITH CARAMANLIS BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE.) I TOLD BITSIOS OF OUR HOPE THAT CARAMANLIS WOULD BE ATTENDING THE NATO SUMMIT MEETING AND SAID THAT I UNDERSTOOD THAT THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY WERE HOLDING TIME ON THE MORNING OF MAY 29 FOR A TALK WITH CARAMANLIS ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT HE WOULD BE ATTENDING. I SAID IT WOULD BE NECESSARY OF COURSE TO FIRM UP THE PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE SOON AND THAT I HOPED THAT CARAMANLIS COULD LET US KNOW, ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS AT LEAST, OF HIS INTENTIONS.

2. BITSIOS INDICATED THAT HE WAS IN FAVOR OF CARAMANLIS ATTENDING THE MEETING BUT SAID THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD NOT
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YET MADE A FINAL DECISION ABOUT THE MATTER. HE SAID THAT HE

WOULD BE MEETING WITH CARAMANLIS LATER TODAY OR TOMORROW MORNING BEFORE HE LEAVES FOR ROME, AND WITH THIS WORD OF AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY ON THE MORNING OF MAY 29, HE WOULD HAVE ONE MORE REASON FOR TRYING TO GET CARAMANLIS TO MAKE A DEFINITE DECISION. BITSIOS SAID HE WOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH ME AGAIN BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE IF HE WERE ABLE TO GET THE PRIME MINISTER'S DECISION.

3. BITSIOS DID NOT SEEM TROUBLED BY THE PRESS REPORTS OUT OF WASHINGTON OVER THE PAST 24 HOURS ATTRIBUTING TO THE SECRETARY THE "STATEMENT" THAT HE WOULD BE MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTERS OF GREECE AND TURKEY DURING THE NATO SUMMIT THE END OF MAY. (ALTHOUGH AN OFFICIAL GOG SOURCE SUBSEQUENTLY STATED THAT HE COULD NEITHER CONFIRM NOR DENY SUCH A MEETING ALTHOUGH HE STRESSED THAT THE "STATEMENT" DOES NOT CONSTITUTE ANY OFFICIAL OR "AGREED" ANNOUNCEMENT OF ANY SUCH MEETING).

4. IF I DO NOT GET DEFINITIVE WORD FROM BITSIOS PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR ROME AT MIDDAY TOMORROW, I WILL FOLLOW UP DIRECTLY WITH THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE LATER IN THE WEEK. KUBISCH

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